

# 2002 Wetlands Reserve Program

## Program Focus —

### ***Wildlife Habitat Improved Through Wetland Restoration --***

The 3,100-acre Scarborough Marsh Wildlife Management Area is owned and managed by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and includes nearly all 2,700 acres of Scarborough Marsh. The long-range management objective for the Scarborough Marsh is to provide suitable habitat for optimum levels of all wildlife species and to provide maximum utilization of the area by sportsmen and other individuals seeking outdoor recreation. The marsh is Maine's largest and most renowned saltmarsh and is recognized for high biological productivity and diversity. The marsh provides habitat for estuarine and catadromous fish species, and supports state and federally listed threatened or endangered species.

Restriction of the natural tidal flow by railroads, and public and private roads, historical salt hay production drainage ditches and farm roads had created tidal restrictions and excessive drainage. This had caused loss of natural tidal pools, ecosystem functions and values and had allowed invasive vegetation to alter the marshes, reducing their value as a habitat and as a resource for the marine environment.

(continued)

## Maine Summary

### **Overview**

Maine has nearly 7 million acres of wetland and other aquatic habitat, which represents approximately 30% of its surface area. Fortunately, the vast majority of these wetlands are still intact and functioning properly. However, the demand for WRP continues to be strong in regards to restoration of tidal salt marshes along Maine's coastline. These are the least abundant and historically the most manipulated wetlands in Maine. Numerous conservation partners have also identified these wetlands as needing restoration and have joined NRCS in addressing this need.

### **Accomplishments**

In FY 2002 NRCS obligated \$210,000 in a restoration cost-share agreement. This agreement will target restoration efforts on 750 acres of degraded salt marsh. Additionally, restoration of 90 acres of salt marsh was completed using WRP funds during FY 2002.

### **Program Benefits**

Tidal salt marshes in Maine provide a critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and shore birds using the coastal fly way. USFWS biologists have reported a sharp increase in the numbers of such birds using the restored marshes. Bird watchers from around the area are enjoying increased opportunities to view rare and endangered species such as the Peregrine Falcon

### **State Contact**

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*After hydrologic restoration: Note permanent pool habitat interspersed with high marsh vegetation. The suite of species dependent on permanent pools -- aquatic plants, invertebrates, fish and migratory waterbirds -- are expected to return.*



***Wildlife Habitat Improved (continued)***

NRCS provided the biological and engineering expertise necessary to develop plans and designs for priority Scarborough Marsh Restoration.

The Seavey Landing project, the first phase of the Scarborough Marsh restoration project, has been completed. The Seavey Landing section of the Scarborough Marsh had been negatively impacted by man-made ditches, which had drained the marsh and reduced the number of permanent pools on the high marsh. Restoration work at this site involved the installation of 7 ditch plugs and the excavation of 15 constructed pools.

<b>Congressional Districts</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2002</b>		<b>Cumulative Total (97-02)</b>	
	<b>Obligated Dollars</b>	<b>Number of Contracts</b>	<b>Obligated Dollars</b>	<b>Number of Contracts</b>
<b>District 1</b>	\$210,000	1	\$578,959	9
<b>District 2</b>	\$0	0	\$207,250	5
<b>State Totals</b>	<b>\$210,000</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$786,209</b>	<b>14</b>

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